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Allen: Waterways Commission Funds Could Benefit Public and Higher Education

LANSING – The Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee today considered legislation sponsored by Senator Jason Allen, R-Traverse City, to allow community colleges, colleges and universities to be eligible to receive funds from the Waterways Commission for marinas, safe harbors or public access sites.

“Senate Bill 150 provides publicly funded colleges and universities with funding from the Waterways Commission to build marinas or safe harbors while expanding public access for Michigan residents,” Allen said. “Michigan’s budget crunch creates an urgent need for the Legislature to be creative in maintaining public access to our natural resources and providing higher education with the tools they need to further maritime academies and aquatic research programs.”

SB 150 would provide an additional outlet for institutions of higher education capital projects. The marinas or safe harbor sites created through the use of the funds would provide access for vessels owned or operated by the college or university and provide opportunities for public access.

“The enactment of Senate Bill 150 would have a tremendous impact on colleges across the state, from NMC in Traverse City to North Central Michigan College in Petoskey to Alpena Community College,” Allen said.

Tim Nelson, President of Northwestern Michigan College and Admiral John Tanner, Superintendent of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy, testified in support of Allen’s legislation during the committee hearing.

Note: A downloadable photograph of Senator Allen, R-Traverse City, with Tim Nelson and Admiral John Tanner is available on the Senate Majority Photowire, located at <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/>.